

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04
OPIC-06 SP-02 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00
PA-02 PRS-01 DOTE-00 FMC-02 CG-00 DLOS-09 OES-07
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4019

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 8351

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, IN

SUBJECT: HALDIA PORT: FIRST SHIPMENT OF COAL EXPORTS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI, INFO BOMBAY, MADRAS
FROM CALCUTTA JUNE 10TH RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE:

CALCUTTA 1395

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, IN

SUBJ: HALDIA PORT: FIRST SHIPMENT OF COAL EXPORTS

REF: A. CALCUTTA 0464, B. 75 CALCUTTA- A-11

1. HALDIA DOCK HANDLED ITS FIRST INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC ON
MAY 23, WHEN 17,500 TONS OF NON-COKING COAL WAS LOADED FOR
WEST GERMANY. THIS SHIPMENT TOOK PLACE THREE MONTHS AFTER
THE FIRST SHIP ENTERED THE NEW DOCK (REFTEL A).

2. ASIDE FROM THE OIL JETTY WHICH HAS BEEN IN OPERATION
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SINCE 1968, COAL HAS BEEN THE ONLY CARGO HANDLED BY HALDIA
SINCE BEGINNING OF OPERATIONS IN FEBRUARY. ACCORDING TO
OFFICIAL FIGURES SEVEN SHIPS HAVE CARRIED ABOUT 80,000 TONS
OF COAL DURING THIS PERIOD.

3. HALDIA HAS TWO MECHANICAL BERTHS FOR BULK HANDLING OF
COAL AND IRON ORE. AT PRESENT, MECHANICAL IRON ORE BERTH

REMAINS UNUTILIZED ALTHOUGH MORE THAN 160,000 TONS OF IRON ORE HAVE BEEN STACKED IN THE BERTH. ACCORDING TO PORT OFFICIALS, JAPANESE, WHO ARE MAIN PURCHASERS OF INDIAN IRON ORE, HAVE NOT AGREED TO TERMS FOR LOADING AT HALDIA. ON THE OTHER HAND, ALTHOUGH THERE IS A READY MARKET FOR COAL, NO COAL HAS BEEN STACKED IN THE COAL BERTH DUE TO ERRATIC SUPPLY OF RAIL CARS. BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF COAL STOCKS AND MECHANICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE LOADER AND OTHER EQUIPMENT, RATE OF COAL LOADING HAS BEEN BELOW CAPACITY. ACTUAL AVERAGE RATE OF COAL LOADING IS ESTIMATED AT ABOUT 4,000 TONS PER DAY AGAINST THE TARGETTED RATE OF 2,000 TONS PER HOUR. DELAYS IN ARRIVAL OF RAILROAD WAGONS HAVE FORCED ONE COAL SHIP TO REMAIN IDLE INSIDE THE DOCK FOR THREE DAYS, WHILE ANOTHER WAITED OUTSIDE THE LOCK GATE FOR SPACE AT THE COAL BERTH. PORT TRUST OFFICIALS DESCRIBE THESE DIFFICULTIES AS "TEETHING TROUBLES", AND CLAIM THEY WILL BE ABLE TO REMOVE THIS "TEMPORARY CONFUSION" SOON AND ACHIEVE QUICK TURN-AROUND OF SHIPS.

4. A REPRESENTATIVE OF NILHAT SHIPPING COMPANY WHICH USED THE COAL BERTH OF HALDIA DOCK IN MAY 1977 FOR ITS TRAMP SHIP "CHRISMA N" TOLD US THAT DESPITE PROBLEMS, NILHAT WAS NOT DISAPPOINTED OR FRUSTRATED BY RECENT EXPERIENCES, AND CONSIDERED THAT DIFFICULTIES WERE UNAVOIDABLE IN A NEW PORT. COMPANY HAS WON CONTRACT FROM GOI-OWNED MINERALS AND METALS TRADING CORPORATION (MMTC) FOR A VOYAGE CHARTER TO CARRY NON-COKING COAL FROM HALDIA AND PARADIP PORTS TO WEST GERMANY. CHRISMA N WAS DETAINED AT HALDIA FOR MORE THAN FIVE DAYS AND STILL WAS UNABLE TO LOAD COAL THERE FOR THE UNCLASSIFIED

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ENTIRE EXPORT VOLUME OF 23,000 TONS BECAUSE THE AVAILABLE 30 FEET DRAFT OF WATER INSIDE THE DOCK WOULD NOT PERMIT SUCH LOAD. THE SHIP LOADED ADDITIONAL 5,500 TONS OF COAL AT PARADIP PORT. PORT TRUST AIMS TO EXPECT THAT IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST A YEAR BEFORE 40 FOOT DRAUGHT IS DREDGED.

5. CONSTRUCTION OF THE FERTILIZER BERTH, FINGER JETTY WITH ITS SIDE JETTY PHOSPHATE BERTH, GENERAL CARGO AND CONTAINER BERTH ARE BEHIND SCHEDULE. EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION BY 1978. TOTAL COST IS NOW ESTIMATED AT RS.1.4 BILLION AGAINST THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE OF RS.0.4 BILLION IN 1967. KORN UNQTEGOHEEN

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